

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 AID-20 NEA-10 IGA-02 EB-11 TRSE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4600

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 1569

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, MT, IT

SUBJ: ITALIAN ASSISTANCE TO PIONEER CORPS

REF: VALLETTA 1395

1. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR MASSA BERNUCCI CALLED TODAY TO INFORM US OF STATUS ITALIAN ASSISTANCE TO PIONEER CORPS. FOLLOWING ARRANGEMENTS WERE CONSUMATED IN AGREEMENT SIGNED DURING VISIT OF ITALIAN MISSION LAST WEEK LED BY AMBASSADOR MONDELLO.

2. ITALIANS HAVE AGREED TO PROVIDE 50 OFFICERS AND NCOS TO CONDUCT BASIC MILITARY TRAINING FOR PERIOD OF ABOUT TWO MONTHS. THIS MILITARY MISSION SCHEDULED ARRIVE AUGUST 1. IT WILL BE HEADED BY AN ITALIAN COLONEL (WHO, ACCORDING TO AFM COMMANDER SAMMUT TAGLIAFERRO, WILL BE TACHNICALY UNDER HIM). ITALIANS WILL PAY COST OF THIS MISSION, BUT WILL FURNISH NO WEAPONS, WHICH WILL COME FROM AFM STOCKS.

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3. UPON COMPLETION OF THIS PHASE, 50 ENGINEERS AND TECHNICANS WILL REPLACE ORIGINAL MISSION IN ORDER TO DIRECT PIONEER CORPS IN PROJECTS OF PUBLIC WORKS NATURE. ITALIANS WILL ALSO PAY COST OF THIS MISSION, AND WOULD ALSO AGREE TO PAY ONE-HALF OF ESTIMATED \$2 MILLION WORTH OF EQUIPMENT REQUIRED, WITH MALTESE PAYING OTHER HALF. \$2 MILLION APPARENTLY ARE TO BE SPENT IN ITALY. ITALIANS FINALLY AGREED TO PICKING UP THIS CHARGE AFTER MINTOFF INSISTED THAT ANDREOTTI AND MEDICI IN LAST GOVERNMENT HAD COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO PAY.

4. ITALIANS HAVE SPECIFIED NO THIRD COUNTRY WILL BE INVOLVED IN FIRST PHASE OF BASIC TRAINING, ALTHOUGH IN SECOND PHASE THEY WOULD NOT OBJECT IF FRENCH OR FRG WERE TO ASSIST IN CERTAIN PROJECTS. THEY WILL NOT RPT NOT COOPERATE WITH ANY LIBYAN INPUT.

5. ITALO-MALTESE AGREEMENT INCLUDES STATUS OF FORCES PROVISIONS. THIS PROVIDES INTER ALIA FOR MALTES JURISDICTION IN CASE OF CRIMINAL OR CIVIL OFFENSES BY ITALIAN PERSONNEL.

6. AS SMALL POINT, NEITHER MINTOFF NOR ITALIANS HAVE AGREED TO PAY FOR UNIFORMS, EXCEPT FOR BOOTS. MASSA BERNUCCI UNDERSTANDS LIBYANS ARE SUPPOSED TO PROVIDE UNIFORMS BUT NOTHING SETTLED. AS A RESULT, PIONEER CORPS WILL PRESENT RATHER MIXED APPEARANCE UNTIL THIS IS RESOLVED.

7. COMMANDER AFM SAMMUT TAGLIAFERRO TOLD US JULY 30 THAT HE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO PREPARE FOR PIONEER CORPS STRENGTH OF 5000 INSTEAD OF EARLIER PLAN FOR 4000. SAMMUT TAGLIAFERRO BELIEVES THERE ARE ENOUGH UNEMPLOYED MALTESE MALES TO FILL THIS QUOTA ALTHOUGH MASSA BERNUCCI CLAIMS ONLY 2600 SO FAR HAVE BEEN RECRUITED.

8. RELATIONSHIPS OF ITALIAN CONTINGENT AND NEWLY RECRUITED PIONEER CORPS OFFICER, NCOS AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL TO EXISTING AFM IS STILL NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. SAMMUT TAGLIAFERRO SAYS HE IS TRYING TO MAINTAIN INTEGRITY OF HIS ORIGINAL 650 OFFICERS AND MEN SO THEY WILL NOT BE SUBMERGED IN AND CONFIDENTIAL

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DILUTED BY NEW PIONEER CORPS. CHAIN OF COMMAND EQUALLY OBSCURE BUT IT SEEMS THAT OLD AFM PERSONNEL WILL PLAY ROLE SIMILAR TO A HEADQUARTERS COMPANY PERFORMING CERTAIN FUNCTIONS FOR BUT OUTSIDE OF CHAIN OF COMMAND OF PIONEER CORPS. THESE RELATIONS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CLARIFIED AS OPERATION PROGRESSES. ITALIAN COMMITMENT IS FOR TWO YEARS ONLY., SO SOME TIME DURING THIS PERIOD AFM WILL HAVE TO BE REORGANIZED IF CORPS IS TO EXIST AFTER

TWO YEARS.

9. COMMENT: ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IS GOING OUT OF HIS WAY TO KEEP NATO COLLEAGUES INFORMED OF ITALIAN ACTIVITIES. HE SEEMS CONCERNED THAT OTHERS PARTICULARLY BRITISH, MAY SUSPECT ITALY OF SOME SINISTER INTENTIONS.

10 MASSA BERNUCCI ALSO MENTIONED THAT A GROUP OF INDUSTRIALISTS FROM NORTHERN ITALY ARE PLANNING TO ESTABLISH TWO FACTORIES OF "MODEST SIZE". ONE IS INTENDED FOR METAL FABRICATING AND THE OTHER FOR MANUFACTURE OF CLOTHING. BOTH WOULD HAVE NORTH AFRICA IN MIND AS MARKET. THIS PLAN IS UNDOUBTEDLY BEING MOUNTED UNDER PRESSURE FROM GOI.
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